



U.S. Department of Justice

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **DISTRICT MAN SENTENCED TO 40 YEARS TO LIFE FOR FELONY MURDER ARISING OUT OF A BURGLARY AND RAPE IN 1983**

**Washington, D.C.** – Melvin Jackson, 57, formerly of 1736 Trinidad Avenue, NE, Washington, D.C., received a sentence of 40 years to life today in connection with the murder of Raymonde Plantiveau during a burglary and rape in the Georgetown area on December 1, 1983, announced Acting U.S. Attorney Channing D. Phillips. Superior Court Associate Judge Michael Rankin sentenced the defendant, who was found guilty, following a jury trial, of two counts of Felony Murder -- one for rape and one for burglary -- and one count of second degree murder while armed.

According to evidence introduced at trial, the decedent, Raymonde Plantiveau, was a French national visiting her daughter who was living in the Georgetown area of Washington, D.C. On December 1, 1983, Mrs. Plantiveau was last seen at approximately 10:30 a.m. as she sat in bed eating breakfast. A few hours later, Mrs. Plantiveau was found dead in her daughter's bed by one of her daughter's roommates. Mrs. Plantiveau was face down and her body was covered with a blanket and a pillow. There were multiple stab wounds to her upper back, she had been raped, and a bloody knife laid next to her on the bed. The assailant appeared to enter the house by cutting a hole in a porch screen door, and had obviously burglarized the house, stealing several items, including jewelry and cash.

An autopsy determined that Mrs. Plantiveau had been stabbed 21 times and that she had died as a result of these wounds. Male DNA was recovered from her body, and the police recovered from the scene, among other things, a knife, human hair, and fingerprints from various items located in the bedroom where Mrs. Plantiveau's body was found. In the weeks and months following the murder, the police attempted to identify potential suspects by looking at other burglaries and sex-related crimes of violence, but were unable to identify a potential subject.

In 2005, following the development of DNA testing as an investigative tool, Detective James Trainum was working on a cold case DNA project for the Metropolitan Police Department and decided to reopen the investigation into Mrs. Plantiveau's murder. Detective Trainum sent

items found at the murder scene to the FBI DNA lab, and ultimately it was determined that the male DNA profile obtained from Mrs. Plantiveau's body matched the DNA profile of the defendant, Melvin Jackson. Later, the defendant gave a statement to the police during which he admitted that he committed burglaries in the early-1980's in the northwest part of the District of Columbia.

In announcing today's sentence, Acting U.S. Attorney Channing D. Phillips praised the efforts of MPD Detectives William Hennessy (retired), Jeffrey Williams, and James Trainum, as well as Officers Carl McClanahan, Booker Mack, Cortez Fletcher, Maureen Walsh, Grant Greenwalt, John Holder, George Klein, and Florine Allen. In addition, Mr. Phillips praised the efforts of Sandra Johnson of the MPD Fingerprint Examination Section, and employees of the FBI DNA labs. Finally, Mr. Phillips commended the efforts of Victim Advocate Marcia L. Rinker and Paralegal Lynette Briggs, as well as former Assistant U.S. Attorney Heidi M. Pasichow, who investigated and indicted the case, and Assistant U.S. Attorneys Michelle Zamarin and Michael T. Truscott, who tried the case.

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